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ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have shown that viewing media violence encourages aggression, desensitization, and pessimism in children. This book reviews research on the effects of television and movie violence on children and adolescents, offering parents suggestions for dealing with the problems it creates. It is asserted that parents frequently underestimate the impact of violent television on children and may be surprised at what children find upsetting. The position is taken that society is increasingly at risk not only for higher levels of violence but for a greater tolerance and acceptance of this violence. The book is divided into four parts. The first part traces the development of television in the United States and examines more than 40 years of research on the subject of media violence and children. The second part presents a developmental approach which helps parents understand that children at different ages think about, understand, and experience the world in very different ways. The third part helps parents understand the effects of the media at different ages in order to help them make decisions about what is appropriate and what is potentially harmful to their children. The fourth part of the book focuses on how parents, as well as government, schools, and the media, can best approach the problem. A final section provides parents with phone numbers and addresses of the major networks and suggests how to contact government agencies involved with media regulation. (AMC)

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